

In the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:

contacting a plastic resin with an oxygen-depleted atmosphere **substantially devoid of oxygen;**

heating the plastic resin to a temperature at which the plastic resin can be extruded;

extruding a quantity of the plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with an inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold.

2. (Currently amended) **A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:**

contacting a plastic resin with an oxygen-depleted atmosphere;

heating the plastic resin to a temperature at which the plastic resin can be extruded;

extruding a quantity of the plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with an inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold;

~~The method of Claim 1~~, wherein contacting the plastic resin with an oxygen-depleted atmosphere occurs at a temperature between about 120°C and about 170°C.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein the mold is maintained at a temperature between about 50°F and about 150°F.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inert gas is at or near ambient temperature.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:

extruding a quantity of a plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with an inert gas, **wherein the inert gas is at a temperature below about 0°F;**

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 7, wherein the mold is maintained at a temperature between about 50°F and about 150°F.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 7, wherein the inert gas is at a temperature below about -100°F.

11. (Currently amended) **A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:**

extruding a quantity of a plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with an inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold;

~~The method of Claim 7,~~ wherein the inert gas is at or near ambient temperature.

12. (Currently amended) **A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:**

extruding a quantity of a plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with an inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold;

~~The method of Claim 7~~, wherein the plastic resin is blown against the mold using the inert gas.

13. (Currently amended) The method of ~~Claim 7~~ **Claim 12**, wherein the inert gas comprises nitrogen, carbon dioxide, argon, or a chlorofluorocarbon.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of ~~Claim 7~~ **Claim 12**, wherein the plastic resin comprises polycarbonate, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, a derivative thereof, or a copolymer thereof.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inert gas is at a temperature below about 0°F.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inert gas is at a temperature below about -100°F.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the plastic resin is blown against the mold using the inert gas.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inert gas comprises nitrogen, carbon dioxide, argon, or a chlorofluorocarbon.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the plastic resin comprises polycarbonate, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, a derivative thereof, or a copolymer thereof.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein contacting a plastic resin with an oxygen-depleted atmosphere comprises drying the plastic resin in the oxygen-depleted atmosphere.

21. (Withdrawn) An extrusion blow pin, comprising:
an outer blow rod operable to supply a first gas used for blowing plastic resin against a mold to form a molded container; and
an inner blow rod operable to supply a second gas used for pressuring and flushing the molded container.

22. (Currently amended) A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:

contacting a plastic resin with a first inert gas to remove absorbed oxygen from the plastic resin prior to extrusion;

heating the plastic resin to a temperature at which the plastic resin can be extruded;

extruding a quantity of the plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with a second inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; **and**

releasing the molded container from the mold; **and**

wherein contacting the first and second inert gases comprise the same inert gas.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein contacting the plastic resin with the first inert gas occurs at a temperature between about 120°C and about 170°C.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the first and second inert gases comprise nitrogen, carbon dioxide, argon, or a chlorofluorocarbon.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the plastic resin comprises polycarbonate, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, a derivative thereof, or a copolymer thereof.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the first and second inert gases comprise the same inert gas.

28. (Previously Presented) A method for making a molded container from a plastic resin, comprising:

contacting a plastic resin with a first inert gas to remove absorbed oxygen from the plastic resin prior to extrusion;

extruding a quantity of a plastic resin into a mold;

blowing the plastic resin against the mold to form a molded container;

pressuring and flushing the molded container with a second inert gas;

depressuring the molded container; and

releasing the molded container from the mold.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 28, wherein the first and second inert gases comprise nitrogen, carbon dioxide, argon, or a chlorofluorocarbon.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 28, wherein the plastic resin comprises polycarbonate, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, a derivative thereof, or a copolymer thereof.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 28, wherein the first and second inert gases comprise the same inert gas.